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EXTERNAL - POLITICAL

UNCLASSIFIED

1. Geneva Conference On Laos. The Soviet press presented the agreement to open the Geneva Conference on May 16 as a victory for Soviet patience and firmness and a defeat of alleged US attempts to renege on the package understanding of a cease-fire, ICC re-activation, and an international conference as three interdependent elements for a peaceful settlement. Press reports left the impression that the US accepted the conference as an unavoidable necessity and was responsible for delaying the opening of the conference by insisting on terms of reference which were unrealistic in view of the alleged shaky US position in Southeast Asia. The press claimed that agreement for opening the conference was reached only after the US discovered that it was isolated, not only from countries like India, but also from its Western European allies, and after a directive from the White House.

The US delegation at Geneva was ridiculed for its relations with the press and also with the Royal Laotian Government. Press accounts referred ironically to the designation ofPhoumi as a "strong man" and left the picture that although he is a creature of the US, he is throwing the latter about, citing the alleged vain three-hour vigil of Harriman at the airport for Phoumi's arrival. The point was also made that the new US Administration is still following the policy of the previous one and is not fulfilling expectations that it is sober and realistic.

2. Vice President's Far Eastern Trip. Vice President Johnson's Far Eastern trip was presented as part of an alleged program by Washington to incite tension in another place while the Geneva Conference is attempting to put out the flames of war in Laos. The press cited US newspaper reports regarding the possibility that US troops will be sent to South Vietnam and commented that the US is openly assuming a gendarme function in South Vietnam, again asking ironically how this could be squared with the reputation the new Administration is seeking to develop.

3. South Korean Military Coup. The initial Soviet press reaction to the military coup in South Korea shows some ambivalence about the United States attitude. The press reported that General Magruder had appealed for support of Prime Minister Chang and also carried TASS item from Paris that British official circles are upset by the coup because of Korea's strategic and political importance and are consulting with the US, "whose position regarding participants of this coup could be decisive." On the other hand, press material from Pyongyang quickly identified the coup as the work of ultra-reactionaries closely linked with the US and implied that the coup was related to alleged US efforts to prevent any relaxation of tension in Southeast Asia. The underlying theme of Soviet press treatment of South Korea is that the people there are anxious for re-unification with the north and an end of corrupt government, and that the ouster of Syngman Rhee last year and subsequent political developments represent efforts, inspired by the US, to dam the popular tide.

UNCLASSIFIED

4. Iraq. Critical Soviet press treatment of Iraqi internal affairs continued with the publication in Trud (May 13), the central trade union organ, of a WFTU protest against the arrest of various "patriots" following May 1 demonstrations. The protest referred to two previous WFTU appeals to the Iraqi authorities which went unanswered and called on all labor unions to show solidarity with their Iraqi brethren. In contrast to some previous front-organization statements on Iraq which appealed to Kassem to intervene in behalf of arrested "patriots," the latest WFTU protest flatly charged the Iraqi government with weakening the people's struggle for the defense of the republic and made no mention of the Iraqi premier.

5. VISITS. The Indian Minister of Food and Agriculture, S. K. Patil, arrived May 16 in Tashkent from Delhi. G.D.Birla, Indian industralist and banker, met May 18 with the chairman of the Soviet State Bank.

Somali Prime Minister Abdirascid was reported in Pravda (May 17) as scheduled to visit the USSR "at the end of May."

Chairman of the Indonesian Supreme Consultative Council Ruslan Abdulgani and his delegation which he himself described as composed of "representatives of the nationalist party, religious circles, communist party, and also our women" was received on May 17 by Khrushchev and was given a reception on the same date by N.N. Organov, Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Soviet Presidium. These events evidently concluded Abdulgani's tour of the USSR. Although Communist Party leader Aidit is still in the USSR, he was not reported as being present at these occasions.

Two Bolivian parliamentary delegations are currently in Moscow. The latest of these, under the leadership of Armando Mollinedo, arrived May 15. Pravda quoted Mollinedo as stating the delegation has come to accelerate a decision on the question of establishing diplomatic relations between Bolivia and the USSR. The delegation of Bolivian Senators, under Senator Julio Castro, which arrived early in May, was given a ceremonial dinner by the Chairman of the Council of the Union of the Supreme Soviet on May 17.

The Soviet press waxed indignant at the French cancellation of the invitation to Gagarin to attend the Paris aviation exhibition. It was suggested that US pressure, due to concern that the President would have to compete for public interest with Gagarin, was behind the French action. In order to underline world enthusiasm for the Soviet spaceman, the press carried reports of (unofficial) invitations from India and Britain. More concretely, the Bulgarian government and party followed the Czech cue and invited Gagar to visit May 24.

INTERNAL

6. Leadership. Ever since his conspicuous absence from leadership appearances during Moscow's May Day festivities, F. R. Kozlov's continued failure to appear in public has given rise to the usual speculation. An

earlier indication that 52-year-old Kozlov may be suffering from poor physical (rather than political) health has received support from a statement attributed to a Soviet official by a diplomatic source of good reliability. In response to an inquiry on Kozlov's whereabouts, the official said that he has been ill from heart trouble since April 22 (five days after his last known public appearance, April 17).

Another Presidium member, USSR Deputy Premier N. G. Ignatov, received prominent attention May 16 when all the central press carried under his photograph a message of formal congratulations on his 60th birthday anniversary with best wishes for "further fruitful work for welfare of the Soviet people" from the Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers. This was accompanied by an ukase awarding him the title "Hero of Socialist Labor," an Order of Lenin (his third) and a "Hammer and Sickle" medal. That Ignatov, who has headed the new State Committee for (Agricultural) Procurement since its formation February 25, may have difficulty in earning future honors seemed suggested by a generally negative evaluation by the CPSU CC Bureau for the RSFSR (top party organ for RSFSR) of progress in the current reorganization of the agricultural apparatus (front-paged in Sovetskaya Rossiya of May 16 immediately adjacent to Ignatov's portrait) and by the Pravda May 17 lead editorial which expressed dissatisfaction with the way the new agricultural procurement system is being introduced and implemented. That Ignatov is endeavoring to correct such shortcomings was illustrated again this week by his reported participation May 12 in a Tselinnyy Kray conference meeting in Tselinograd to consider the reorganization and improvement of agricultural procurement organizations.

Khrushchev has returned to Moscow after a week in which he essentially repeated in Georgia for the Soviet Georgian anniversary his performance of the preceding week in Armenia. In his speech in Tbilisi on May 12 as in Yerevan on May 6, he balanced praise for Soviet achievements with attention to local accomplishments, contrasted "capitalist slavery" with "true socialist freedom," stressed consumer interests and made audience-appealing references to local nationality heroes (including praise of Stalin), indirectly calling attention to his own World War II role on the Stalingrad front in the process. Georgian First Secretary V. P. Mzhavanadzhe in almost the same words as Armenian First Secretary Ya. N. Zarobyan a week before, waxed eloquent in describing the "deep love and authority" which that "true friend and teacher, the worthy continuator of the immortal cause of Lenin," Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev had won by his "titanic struggle for peace for the whole world, tremendous, seething, organizational and creative activity, indefatigable care for the welfare of the working peoples" and so on.

7. Selection and Training of Propagandists. A long article in Pravda of May 16 cites many deficiencies in the present selection and training of propagandists and mentions a previously unpublicized decree of the CPSU Central Committee of May 5, 1961 "On Measures for the Improvement of the Selection and Preparation of Propaganda Personnel." This decree, when published, may prove to be the single most significant statement on party propaganda since the basic decree "On the Tasks of Party Propaganda Under Current Conditions" of January 9, 1960. In what seems to be a striking

departure from most earlier articles on propaganda, there is no reference whatsoever to the January 9 decree. The article (unsigned) notes that an improvement in the selection and training of propagandists is especially important now when party organizations are preparing for the new school year in the system of political education, the basic content of which will be "studies at all links of the political network of the materials of the XXII Congress and the new CPSU programm." Suggestions for the means of improving the training of propaganda personnel include: the essential reorganization of the work of evening universities of Marxism-Leninism, a more active role by spare time regular courses under party organizations (for propagandists in urban areas), instituting correspondence courses (for propagandists in rural areas) and the more effective and frequent use of propaganda conferences and seminars as well as "houses and rooms of political enlightenment." Party organizations are said to have a responsibility to increase by all means possible the role of the press, radio and television in the education and training of propaganda personnel.

The listing of "serious deficiencies" in the selection and training of party propagandists, although impressive, loses much of its impact from the failure to name specific organizations or individuals at fault. However, this omission may be deliberate until such time as the new decree, which may name organizations and individuals, is published. Although not referred to, the basic January 1960 decree obviously has not brought forth the reform intended in party propaganda activity. Publication of the new propaganda decree may be postponed until sufficient mileage has been given to public "discussion" of Khrushchev's July 17, 1960 speech before Soviet intellectuals which has just been published for the first time (in abbreviated form) in Kommunist No. 7 of May 1961.

8. Additional Kirgiz CC Secretary Released: The May 11 Sovetskaya Kirgiziya account of the Kirgiz Central Committee plenum which replaced First Secretary I. R. Razzakov and demoted Second Secretary E. F. Stepkin (Weeka No. 19 of May 12) reveals action against still another Kirgiz CC secretary not mentioned in the central press. Using somewhat ambiguous wording, this account states that the plenum released V. N. Zaychikov as a secretary "in connection with recall placing him at the disposition of the CPSU Central Committee."

9. Banishment Under New RSFSR Anti-Parasite Law. In the first such action noted under the provisions of the new RSFSR "anti-parasite" decree of May 4, a Moscow "comradely court" has sentenced a chronic drunk to two years banishment from Moscow. The decision was passed to the raion executive committee for implementation (Moskovskaya Pravda of May 18.)

10. Tadzhikistan Account Padding Continues. Kommunist Tadzhikistana of May 14 reports a meeting of republic accountants called to review the results of the VII plenum of the Tadzhik CC and the "shameful manifestation" of wide-spread account padding in all branches of the Republic's economy. This scandal caused the dismissal (in disgrace) of Republic Party First Secretary T. Ul'dzhabaev, "Premier" N. Dolgushev, and other top officials (Weeka No. 16 of Apr 14). Nevertheless, such illegal activity in

Tadzhikistan apparently is continuing. The report states that "...even now, after the January Plenum of the CC of the CPSU and the VII Plenum of the CC of the CP of Tadzhikistan, the anti-state, anti-social practice of account padding continues, concealing from accounts acreages sown, industrial production and trade prices."

Tending to support the assumption that his current role in Tadzhikistan is that of "clean-up man" from Moscow, newly-appointed Second Secretary (and former CPSU CC Inspector) I.G.Koval' was featured prominently in the report of the meeting.

MILITARY (UNCLASSIFIED)

11. Navy. On 11 May travellers from the Office of the Naval Attache visited Sevastopol for a period of approximately seven hours. This port is the Headquarters and main naval base of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet and has been closed to foreigners since the end of World War II. It has not yet been declared officially open.

For the Ambassador:

Boris H. Klosson
Counselor for Political Affairs

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